

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 08320

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR PBOR EG ET SO
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN POLICY RE HORN OF AFRICA

REF: CAIRO 7861

1. FONMIN KAMEL TOLD AMBASSADOR, MARCH 13, THAT GOE CONTINUES TO WATCH CLOSELY HORN OF AFRICA DEVELOPMENTS. RECALLED HE HAD MET WITH VISITING SOMALI FONMIN ABDUL RAHMAN BARRE TEN DAYS AGO TO URGE THAT GSDR ANNOUNCE WITHDRAWAL. AT THE TIME SOMALI FONMIN HAD STILL SPOKEN BRAVELY ABOUT FIGHTING UNTIL THE LAST SOMALI TO RETAIN SOMALI RIGHTS TO OGADEN. HE HAD URGED GOE TO RESUME MILITARY SUPPLIES. THESE, KAMEL NOTED, HAD BEEN CUT OFF FOLLOWING KENYA AIRCRAFT INCIDENT. ALTHOUGH SADAT HAD FOR A TIME WANTED GOE LOOK FOR ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF PROVIDING MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO SOMALIA, GAMASY HAD FORCEFULLY ARGUED AGAINST THIS ON GROUNDS THAT GOE HAD ALREADY PROVIDED TOO MUCH EQUIPMENT AND SHOULD NOW CUT ITS EQUIPMENT LOSSES. DETERIORATING MILITARY SITUATION IN SOMALIA DEMONSTRATED CORRECTNESS OF THIS COURSE. ABDUL RAHMAN BARRE, KAMEL NOTED, HAD BEEN BITTER ABOUT USG ATTITUDE.

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2. KAMEL SAID HE HAD TRIED OUT ON ABDUL RAHMAN BARRE AND, SUBSEQUENTLY, ON SOMALI AMBASSADOR ISMAIL THE EGYPTIAN IDEA CONVENE OAU MEDIATION COMMITTEE MEETING HERE IN CAIRO AND THEREAFTER UNDERTAKE DIRECT MEDIATION BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA. HE HAD BEEN SURPRISED AT RELAXED SOMALI REPLY. UP TO NOW SOMALI AMBASSADOR HERE IS STILL SAYING THAT SUCH A MEETING MIGHT BE USEFUL, BUT IS SUGGESTING IT NOT BE

CALLED UNTIL FIRST WEEK OF APRIL. KAMEL SAID HE ASSUMED SOMALIS ARE LOOKING AT OTHER ALTERNATIVES, BUT NOTED THEY HAD NOT BEEN VERY FORTHCOMING ON THIS SCORE. HE MUSED THAT PERHAPS SOMALI AMBASSADOR IS SIMPLY NOT BEING KEPT INFORMED.

3. KAMEL ASKED ABOUT USG REACTION TO EGYPTIAN IDEA. TOLD HIM I HAD NOT YET RECEIVED ANY REACTION. SINCE HE SEEMED A BIT SURPRISED THAT WE HAD NOT YET REACTED, I EXPLAINED THAT FAST-BREAKING DEVELOPMENTS IN HORN PROBABLY ACCOUNT FOR THE DELAY.

4. KAMEL ALSO INDICATED THAT EGYPTIAN/ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS ARE SHOWING SOME SIGN OF THAW. NEW ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR HAD INDICATED HIS GOVERNMENT'S DESIRE RESUME DIALOGUE. HE HAD SUGGESTED THAT EITHER AN EGYPTIAN DELEGATION GO TO ADDIS OR AN ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION COME TO CAIRO TO CONDUCT TALKS ON BILATERAL RELATIONS. KAMEL SAID HE HAD AGREED IN PRINCIPLE AND PRESENT THINKING IS THAT AN ETHIOPIAN DELEGATION WILL SOMETIME IN APRIL VISIT CAIRO. APPARENT ETHIOPIAN WILLINGNESS IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH GOE HAS ENCOURAGED LATTER TO BELIEVE A MEDIATION EFFORT ON ITS PART MIGHT BE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA.

5. COMMENT: IN VIEW CONTINUING CONSULTATIONS WE HAVE HAD WITH GOE ON HORN, WOULD APPRECIATE UPDATE ON CURRENT U.S. CONFIDENTIAL

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OBJECTIVES AND PLAN OF ACTION THAT WE COULD SHARE WITH GOE. WE ARE RECEIVING AS INFO ADDRESSEE NUMEROUS MESSAGES ON SUBJECT, BUT CANNOT ALWAYS BE SURE FROM THESE WHAT OUR CURRENT PLANS AND ACTIONS VIS-A-VIS FAST-BREAKING HORN DEVELOPMENTS ARE. WE ALSO OWE EGYPTIANS REPLY TO THEIR PROPOSAL. ELTS

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